APPENDIX E

HISTORY OF TRAVEL MANAGEMENT IN THE WEST MOJAVE PLANNING AREA OF THE CDCA

Purpose:

The purpose of this Appendix is to discuss the many phases and efforts that have affected travel management on the public lands within the West Mojave Planning Area (WEMO) of the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA), and that have led to the current route inventory in this plan.

The inventory for this plan, completed in 2012, revealed almost 15,000 miles of linear features on the ground in the planning area. Within the 2.35 million acres of limited access public lands within the planning area, this averages to about 4 miles of routes per section—in other words, two North-South routes and two East-West routes through each section.

However, this seems like an overwhelming number of miles of routes, since the latest inventories for the 2006 WEMO Plan revealed just over half as many miles in the West Mojave Planning area, approximately 8,000 miles. So, how and why are we where we are?

Pre-CDCA Plan:

Management of off-highway vehicle (OHV) use on the public lands is based on Executive Orders, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended (FLPMA), and 43 CFR Part 8340. On February 8, 1972, President Richard Nixon issued Executive Order 11644—Use of off-road vehicles on the public lands. This Order established the first uniform policies regarding OHV use on public lands. The Secretaries of Interior, Agriculture, and Defense were directed to develop and issue regulations that would designate areas and trails on public lands on which the use of OHVs might be permitted and those which may not be permitted for OHV use. The Order also required the development of operating conditions, public information, appropriate penalties for violations of regulations adopted pursuant to the order, and the monitoring of the effect of the use of OHV's on lands under their jurisdiction.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, as amended (FLPMA) is considered the "organic act" for the BLM and establishes the agency's multiple use mandate to serve present and future generations of Americans. FLPMA specifically addresses transportation and motorized vehicle access in several sections. Title V authorizes the issuance of rights-of-way for use of the public lands for such features as roads, trails, highways, livestock driveways, or other necessary means of transportation which are in the public interest and which require a right-of-way to cross the public lands. Title VI established the CDCA and specifies that the use of all California desert resources can and should be provided for in a multiple use and sustained yield management plan, to conserve resources for future generations, to provide for the present and future use and enjoyment, particularly outdoor recreation uses, including the use, where appropriate, of off-road recreational vehicles (OHV) (43 USC 1781).

On May 24, 1977, President Jimmy Carter issued Executive Order 11989 –Off-Road Vehicles on Public Lands to amend Executive Order 11644 by adding Section 9. Section 9(a) directs that if a determination is made that OHV use will cause or is causing considerable adverse effects on the soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, or cultural or historic resources of an area or trail on public lands, that the agency immediately close the area or trail to the type of vehicle causing the damage, until such time as it is determined that such effects have been eliminated and that measures have been implemented to prevent future recurrence. Additionally Section 9(b) authorizes the adoption of policy that parts of the public lands shall be closed to use by OHV except those areas and trails which are suitable and specifically designated as open to such use pursuant to Section 3 of the Order.

FLPMA and these two executive orders formed the basis of the guidance found in Part 8340 of Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which were developed by the Secretary of the Interior for the Bureau of Land Management. Subparts within Part 8340 establish conditions of use, vehicle operations standards, and penalties. Specifically Subpart 8342 outlines the designation criteria, procedures, and changes related to designation of areas and trails available for use by OHVs. All public lands are to be designated as open, limited, or closed to OHVs. These designations are to be based on the protection of the resources of the public lands, promotion of the safety of all the users of the public lands, and the minimization of conflicts among various uses of the public lands.

1980 CDCA Plan:

With the passage of FLPMA the Congress found that "the California desert contains historical, scenic, archeological, environmental, biological, cultural, scientific, educational, recreational, and economic resources that are uniquely located adjacent to an area of large population." It also found that its resources, "including certain rare and endangered species of wildlife, plants and fishes, and numerous archeological and historic sites" are "seriously threatened by air pollution, inadequate Federal management authority, and pressures of increased use, particularly recreational use,". Congress stated that "the use of all California desert resources can and should be provided for in a multiple use and sustained yield management plan to conserve these resources for future generations, and to provide present and future use and enjoyment, particularly outdoor recreation uses, including the use, where appropriate, of off-road recreational vehicles." To accomplish this, BLM was directed to prepare a plan for the "management, use, development, and protection of public lands within the California Desert Conservation Area" (of which the western Mojave Desert comprises the northwestern third). The plan would "take into account the principles of multiple use and sustained yield in providing for resource use and development, including, but not limited to, maintenance of environmental quality, rights of way, and mineral development."

The plan that was developed is the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan which was completed in 1980. The stated goal of the CDCA Plan is to "provide for the use of the public lands and resources…including economic, educational, scientific, and recreational uses". To achieve the goal of the Plan management actions are first based on a geographic basis using guidelines establishing four Multiple Use classes. The Multiple Use classes are Class C (Controlled Use), L (Limited Use), M (Moderate Use) and I (Intensive Use). Small areas were left "Unclassified", due to their scattered or isolated location.

These guidelines are further clarified, refined, and expressed in goals for each Plan Element. There are twelve Plan Elements covering the major resources or issues of public concern that were identified during the CDCA planning process. Those Elements of the CDCA Plan that have access management goals or objectives, or discuss the need for access to desert resources are the Motorized-Vehicle Access; Recreation; Wilderness, Geology, Energy, and Mineral; and the Energy Production and Utility Corridors Elements.

As part of the CDCA Plan, and in accordance with Executive Orders 11644 and 11989, all public lands in the CDCA were designated as open, closed, or limited to vehicle use. The designations were made on the basis of multiple-use classes with certain exceptions set forth in the Motorized Vehicle Access (MVA) Element. These designations are displayed on CDCA Plan Map Number 10 – Motorized-Vehicle Access.

Amendments to the CDCA:

The CDCA Plan was written based on the concept that it would provide the framework for management of the CDCA for the next 20 years and in some situations and actions much further into the future. It was recognized at the time of writing that it could not be cast in concrete and therefore provided for the ability to be amended as needed to adjust to needed changes and to acknowledge better ways of doing things in the future.

Between 1981 and 1990, amendments to the Plan were made on an annual or biennial basis. The CDCA Plan reprint of 1999 includes a full review of the amendments made to the plan between 1980 and 1999. The following is a description of the more significant changes that effected travel management within the WEMO planning area.

Amendments to the Plan that had the largest effect on travel management occurred in 1982 and 1985. The 1982 Amendment revised the Motorized Vehicle Element while the Goals for all Plan Elements were restated in 1985.

The 1982 Amendment incorporated 43 CFR 8340 into the Motorized Vehicle Access Element and made changes and clarified the Open, Closed, and Limited Area designations. While public vehicle travel is permitted anywhere in Open Areas and no public vehicle travel is allowed in a Closed Area, Limited areas are more complicated. Limited vehicle access means that motorized-

vehicle access is allowed only on certain "routes of travel." This was described in the CDCA Plan: "At the minimum, use will be restricted to existing routes of travel." The 1982 amendment defined that an existing route as "a route established before approval of the Desert Plan in 1980, with a minimum width of two feet, showing significant surface evidence of prior vehicle use or for washes, history of prior use." Depending on the particular Multiple Use class and the degree of control needed in a particular area, Limited Areas were managed differently:

> Class I: "Unless it is determined that further limitations are necessary, those areas not "open" will be limited to use of existing routes."
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> Class M: "access will be on existing routes, unless it is determined that use on specific routes must be limited further."
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> Class L: "Due to higher levels of resource sensitivity in Class L, vehicle access will be directed toward use of approved routes of travel. Approved routes will include primary access routes intended for regular use and for linking desert attractions for the general public as well as secondary access routes intended to meet specific user needs. Routes not approved for vehicle access will be reviewed and, after opportunity for public comment, those routes deemed to conflict with management objectives or to cause unacceptable resource damage will be given priority for closure."… "All remaining routes of travel will be monitored for either inclusion as approved routes or for closure to resolve specific problems."
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> Class C and ACECs: "In Class C areas prior to wilderness designation by Congress, and in ACECs where vehicle use is allowed, vehicle access will be managed under the guidelines for Class L."
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> Unclassified areas: "In areas not assigned to a Multiple-Use Class, the route approval process will be applied as needed to resolve specific problems and to establish a cohesive program."

Additionally, the 1982 Amendment identified the concept of individual Route Designation in addition to Area Designations. Routes could be designated as "open," "closed," or "limited" for motor vehicle use which was generally tied to area designation. "Open" routes allowed for access by motorized vehicles. "Closed" routes prohibited motorized vehicles access with the exception of use for emergency purposes, national defense purposes, use expressly authorized under permit, lease, or contract, and for official purposes. "Limited" routes allowed motorized vehicles to travel on the route but that use could be restricted. Some of the restrictions could be types of vehicles, season of use, or permitted or licensed vehicles only. Route designations could be made in each of the four multiple use classes, in ACECs, and in unclassified lands. Routes designations could not be made in Congressionally designated wilderness areas.

Following the concept of designation the MVA Element developed an Implementation approach to the management of vehicle designations. Within this section it was recognized that the implementation of "Limited" areas would "require detailed analysis to insure that each area's limitations are appropriate to the issues and resources involved. Until such limitations are put into effect, these areas will be managed on an interim basis as explained under "Interim Management of Vehicle Access"' guidelines. These guidelines specified that "Existing routes of travel may be used in all Class L and M areas, and in those Class I areas not designated open and in unclassified lands, unless other limitations are in effect. In Class C areas, vehicle use will occur as if the areas were Class L until such time as the area formally becomes wilderness, except in those cases where vehicle use could impair wilderness suitability."

1985-1987 Route Designation Effort

Shortly after the completion of the CDCA Plan the route designation process began. In June 1981, the BLM published a set of 21 maps titled Motorized Vehicle Interim Access Guides (IAG), which covered all of the BLM administered public lands within the CDCA. These maps were distributed to the public for their use, input, and review in order to gather information on the existing route network within the CDCA. Also in the fall of 1981 each Resource Area Office developed an Ad Hoc Advisory Committee. These groups were to include a good cross section of desert users. These ad hoc groups held meetings and took field trips with the intent of working towards the goal of helping to develop a designated route system for the public lands.

In addition to the Ad Hoc Advisory Committees efforts, during the early 1980s, BLM staff began gathering existing route data using a collection of 15 & 7 ½ minute United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps, aerial photography, and field checks. No extensive field inventory was conducted at the time. Based on this gathered information and input of the Ad Hoc Committee BLM staff developed a designated route network of motorized vehicle routes throughout the planning area. The staff documented their recommendations for routes on forms titled "Vehicle Route Designation Recommendation/Decision". These forms included space for describing the resource values of special concern for the area, whether the route traveled across or provided access to private lands, the complete text of 43 CFR 8342.1 Designation Criteria, and selection of a recommendation-proposed designation (Open, Closed, Limited). If a Closed or Limited recommendation was chosen the criteria from 43 CFR 8342.1 that the designation was based upon was to be indicated, along with space provide decision rational and explanation of the route's Limited or Closed status. This designation criteria was followed up with space for signatures by the Staff specialist making the recommendation, approval by the Area Manager, and concurrence by the District Manager.

These recommendations resulted in the development of Draft Routes of Travel Decision Maps. These maps were sent out to the public, the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee, and were distributed at public meetings being held to solicit input on the proposed route network. At the completion of

the public comment period, input was reviewed and changes made to the system as deemed appropriate thus creating the final route designations. These efforts culminated and became effective with the publication of notices in the Federal Register for the Ridgecrest Field Office (50 FR 33856; August 21, 1985) and for the Barstow Field Office (50 FR 23364; June19, 1987, and 52 FR 35589; September 22, 1987).

Additionally, other route designation efforts occurred before and after the far reaching 1985-87 route designation efforts mainly related to ACECs. Specific area route designations efforts were frequently included as part of the ACEC Plan development efforts to further ACEC management goals and objectives. These efforts generally occurred between 1982 and 1995. These ACEC designations included route networks for the following ACECs: Afton Canyon (1989), Amboy Crater (year unknown), Barstow Woolly Sunflower (1982), Bedrock Springs (1987), Big Morongo Canyon (1982 and 1996), Black Mountain (1988), Calico Early Man Site (1984), Cronese Basin (1984), Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area (1988), Fossil Falls (1986), Great Falls Basin (1987), Harper Dry Lake (1982), Jawbone/Butterbredt (1982), Juniper Flats (1988), Last Chance Canyon (1982), Mojave Fishhook Cactus (1990), Rainbow Basin (1991), Red Mountain Spring (1987), Rose Springs (1985), Sand Canyon (1989), Short Canyon (1990), Soggy Dry Lake Creosote Rings (1982), Steam Well (1982), Trona Pinnacles (1989), Upper Johnson Valley Yucca Rings (1982), Western Rand Mountains (1994) and Whitewater Canyon 1982).

Desert Access Guides

Between the late 1980s and the mid-1990s, BLM published twenty-one Desert Access Guide maps of the CDCA Plan area. Within the Ridgecrest and Barstow field office boundaries, these maps displayed the route networks designated in 1985 and 1987, and the networks designated for the ACECs. These DAGs were distributed for public use.

Listing of the Desert Tortoise

In April 1990 the Mojave population of the Desert Tortoise was listed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service as threatened.

Ord Mountain Pilot Off-Road Vehicle Designations

In 1995, the BLM issued an emergency closure of routes in the Ord Mountain area in response to the 1994 designation of critical desert tortoise habitat in the area. The emergency closure utilized available on the ground knowledge, topographic maps, and early West Mojave Plan data that had already been collected in this sensitive area, to identify a total of 549 miles of routes in

the area and designate 100 miles of routes on public lands as open. In response to public feedback on the emergency network, BLM undertook a pilot project within the Ord Mountain area to test methods to acquire a more complete inventory of routes of travel and revisit the emergency closure designations.

As part of the review, the Natural Applied Research Science Center (NARSC) was contracted to conduct a pilot project using low-level aerial photography to digitally record routes. The data was then captured using early GIS digitizing technology and computer evaluation to verify the inventory in the area. An additional 113 miles of routes was identified based on the aerial data review and field reviews by the public and BLM for a total of 662 miles over an area covering just under 125,000 acres. On public lands, 547 miles were identified on 102,135 acres, which did not include routes and lands received as a result of the recent 11,835-acre Catellus acquisitions in January, 2000. This proposed network was developed from public input and evaluated in the Ord-Mountain Route Designation EA, published and approved in 2000.

The Ord pilot project had some limitations but was considered successful in improving and augmenting on-the-ground inventory information. However, due to its expense, the Ord Pilot project could not be applied on a larger scale. Following the development of the Ord Pilot Project inventory, a large scale satellite-photography based draft route system was developed in about 1997. This route system was developed using mid-1990's satellite photography and a custom-designed computer program that analyzed the satellite photos and identified linear features possessing shades of gray that matched the gray associated with a route. A computer modeling program was used due to the lack of staffing available to do heads up digitizing at the time. Once the computer based route system was finished it was field checked for accuracy. The field check identified that what appeared to be "routes" in the satellite photos were sometimes fence lines and other non-route ground features. Because of these problems this draft system and inventory was abandoned and a GPS field inventory was undertaken beginning in the fall of 2001.

Redesign Effort

In the mid-1990s, BLM began a process to redesign a portion of the existing 1985 and 1987 route networks (WEMO redesign area). The primary focus of the WEMO redesign area became Desert Tortoise critical habitat. Certain other sensitive areas were also included in the redesign of the network. This redesign effort was known as the Western Mojave Desert Off Road Vehicle Designation Project, and it was approved by a Decision Record signed on June 30, 2003 (2003 WEMO Route Designation Project).

2003 Western Mojave Desert Off Road Vehicle Designation Project

The 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project built upon these earlier planning efforts. Its purpose was to update the previous route designation efforts, taking into account new or significant planning issues like the listing of the desert tortoise as a threatened species in 1990. Of the 3.1 million acres of public land within the planning area, the 2003 Route Designation Project addressed 2.35 million acres of public land because it only addressed limited access lands. The overall planning area for the 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project is synonymous with the region that was also addressed by the 2006 West Mojave Plan, an interagency habitat conservation plan that developed conservation strategies for over 100 sensitive plant and animal species.

Due to the size of the area covered by the WEMO Plan, 3.1 million acres of public lands in a larger 9.4 million area of contiguous lands, it was determine that the most effective way to approach route designation was to subdivide the WEMO Plan area into manageable and recognizable designation planning units. This effort resulted in the creation of twenty-one "subregions". These twenty-one subregions included: Amboy, Bighorn, Coyote, East Sierra, El Mirage, El Paso, Fremont, Granite, Juniper, Kramer, Middle Knob, Morongo, Newberry-Rodman, North Searles, Ord, Pinto, Ridgecrest, Red Mountain, Sleeping Beauty, South Searles and Superior. These twenty-one subregions cover approximately 1.3 million acres of public lands which is 42 percent of the overall planning area. In addition to the new subregions the planning effort would also incorporate the route designations efforts for the ACECs where route designation had been completed, the Ord Mountain Pilot Project and the remaining areas covered by the 1985-87 designation efforts. Some of this additional data was within one or more of the twenty-one subregions.

Based on the level of resource sensitivity eleven of the twenty-one subregions were selected for detailed updating in the Designation Project. The eleven subregions were: Ridgecrest, El Paso, Middle Knob, Red Mountain, Fremont, Kramer, El Mirage, Superior, Coyote, Newberry-Rodman, and Juniper. Seven of these subregions were within Desert Tortoise critical habitat: Coyote, El Mirage, Fremont, Kramer, Newberry-Rodman, Red Mountain and Superior. Middle Knob included sensitive plant habitat. Two others, El Paso and Ridgecrest were located close to the City of Ridgecrest, and both were popular areas with increasing motorized vehicle use. Finally, the Juniper subregion was included for a new field inventory in response to comments made during the public review of the Draft WEMO Environmental Impact Statement.

Nine subregions were not selected for new field inventories. They included: Amboy, Bighorn, East Sierra, Granite, Morongo, North Searles, Pinto, Sleeping Beauty, and South Searles. These nine were not significantly affected by the issues associated with the other subregions. In these nine subregions, the existing 1985 and 1987 route networks were retained. The 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project made only a few minor corrections to the existing network in these subregions. These corrections included the realignment of some routes at boundaries between

the ACEC networks and the 1985 and 1987 networks, to ensure that the routes connected seamlessly.

Between September 2001 and March 2002, thirteen field crews inventoried nearly 4,400 miles of motorized vehicle access routes within ten of the elven subregions that were selected for detailed updating. These ten subregions encompass about 774,000 acres of public lands, which is 33 percent of the Limited access portions of the overall WEMO Planning area. The Juniper subregion ended up not getting a detailed field inventory due to time constraints and the availability of route data that was considered adequate at the time to meet the needs of a more detailed update. During this time frame nine of the subregions (excluding the Juniper subregion) were inventoried.

During the inventory process both four wheel drive and motorcycle crews participated in the survey. Routes were recorded using global positioning system (GPS) technology. The nature of the route (graded gravel, good dirt, motorcycle trail) was recorded, and nearly two dozen types of pertinent desert features mapped (including campsites, mines, trailheads, and water sources). This information was transferred into the planning team's digital GIS library. In addition, data collected for the development of 1985 and 1987 designation efforts, and during the preparation of BLM management plans for ACECs between 1980 and the late 1990s, was digitized and stored in the GIS database.

Eight of the ten inventoried subregions and the Juniper subregion, along with minor revisions to the nearly 20 year old designation efforts of 1985- 1987, the nearly 10 to 20 year old ACEC Plans with route designations, and the more recent Ord pilot project designations, served as the basis for the evaluation in BLM's 2003 Environmental Assessment and Decision Record for the 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project. The nine subregions encompassed about 698,000 acres of public lands, representing 35 percent of the overall Limited access public lands within the planning area. Minor revisions occurred in 2 other subregions, the North Searles and El Mirage subregions, and in the Black Mountain ACEC. In addition various edge matching of routes occurred at 25 locations to align the ACEC, 1985-87, and 2003 designation boundaries. For the El Paso Mountains and Ridgecrest subregions the existing 1985-87 network was adopted until the completion of a collaborative planning effort could be done in coordination with local jurisdictions and the general public. Upon completion of this planned collaborative effort and NEPA analysis the 1985-1987 route network would then be amended and an updated network would then be established for the El Paso and Ridgecrest subregions.

The purpose of the 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project was to update the existing West Mojave route designations, and to adopt the revised route network as a component of the CDCA Plan, while the 2006 WEMO Plan was under development. The 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project evaluated four route network alternatives, including the Proposed Action, Enhanced Ecosystem Protection, Enhanced Recreation Opportunities, and No Action. The resulting Record of Decision selected Alternative A, the Proposed Action, which was based on

the existing route designations, modified to incorporate a revised network within desert tortoise critical habitat and other sensitive resource areas. The other two action alternatives included the same or very similar route networks, with more or fewer restrictions on the routes. That network, totaling 5,098 mile of routes, served as the basis for the route network alternatives evaluated in the 2006 WEMO Plan.

In summary, the June 30, 2003 Decision Record approved a new route network within ten subregions. This new route network included designations of routes in the Coyote, El Mirage, Fremont, Juniper, Kramer, Middle Knob, Newberry-Rodman, Red Mountain, Ridgecrest and Superior subregions. In all other areas, the 2003 Decision Record made no change to the existing designated route network (except for a few minor network connections). The 2003 Decision Record approved the Ord Pilot network, based on the environmental assessment prepared for that area in 2000. The existing route networks designated in 1985 and 1987, and for ACECs designated between 1982 and 1996, remained in effect. This includes the Western Rand Mountains ACEC network. The 2003 Decision Record established the El Paso Collaborative Access Planning Area for the El Paso subregion, and directed BLM to design a revised motorized vehicle access network for that subregion in collaboration with local jurisdictions and the general public (not yet completed).

2006 West Mojave Plan

The route designations adopted in the 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project effort considered the baseline for the No Action Alternative in the development of the 2006 WEMO Plan. The baseline was subjected to minor modifications and a field survey was conducted in one additional subregion—Juniper Flats. The EIS for the 2006 WEMO Plan evaluated seven alternatives which addressed various use restrictions, using the findings in the 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project as a point of departure. With respect to travel management, the use restrictions on the routes varied among the 2006 WEMO FEIS alternatives, but the overall mileage of the network did not vary. The proposed network evaluated in the 2005 WEMO FEIS consisted of the 2003 network with modifications in specific areas. The Record of Decision (ROD) adopted the FEIS proposed action with minor modifications, resulting in the 5,098 mile network of the 2006 WEMO Plan.

<u>Vehicle Access Decisions in 2006 WEMO ROD</u>

In 2006, the BLM approved a comprehensive amendment covering the WEMO Planning area of the CDCA. Key elements of the CDCA Plan that were updated for the WEMO Planning Area include the Wildlife Element, the Vegetation Element, the Grazing Element, the Recreation Element, and the Motor Vehicle Access Element.

The vehicle route network approved in the 2006 WEMO Plan was based on the 2003 vehicle route network, with the following modifications:

- The mileage of non-motorcycle routes in higher density tortoise population areas was decreased from 439 miles to 384 miles;
- The mileage of vehicle routes within ACECs was reduced from 427 miles to 406 miles; and
- Within the Juniper subregion, a redesigned vehicle access network was adopted that consisted of 73 miles of open routes and 25 miles of routes that would be limited to use by single-track vehicles (motorcycles), which replaced the 152 miles of open routes that had been adopted in 2003.

Overall, the 2006 WEMO Plan included modification of the vehicle management decisions, including OHV route designations, on more than 2.35 million acres of Limited access public land within the CDCA. The ROD for the 2006 WEMO Plan approved the designation of 5,098 miles of motorized vehicle routes.

The 2006 WEMO Plan Amendment approved a total of 12 separate decisions, each affecting multiple geographical areas with the planning area. Most of the decisions focused on establishment or adjustment of ACECs for biological resources and changes to multiple use classes to reflect an increased resource protection balance. The specific decision components related to Motorized Vehicle Use and route designations made in the 2006 WEMO ROD, are as follows:

- Decision 5: Recommendations made in the 1994 Rand Mountains-Fremont Valley Management Plan were adopted, including adoption of the proposed motorized vehicle access network to be managed with an educational permit system.
- Decision 6: The motorized vehicle access network in the Afton Canyon Natural Area was adopted.
- Decision 9: The motorized vehicle access network in the remainder of the planning area was adopted, and included minor modifications of the 2003 route network, a redesign of the Juniper subregion, and route closures in the Lane mountain milkvetch ACEC, Barstow woolly sunflower ACEC, the Mojave monkeyflower ACEC, and the Red Mountain subregion. The approved network also included the opening of a 9-mile undesignated route east of Haiwee Reservoir, and establishment of competitive "C" routes northeast of the Spangler Hills Open Area.
- Decision 10: The Stopping, Parking, and Camping Section of the CDCA Plan Motorized Vehicle Access Element was modified to incorporate restrictions within DWMAs, including limiting camping to previously existing disturbed camping areas adjacent to open routes and limiting stopping and parking to within 50 feet of the centerline of open routes.

- Decision 11: The portion of the Barstow to Vegas Race Course within the WEMO Planning area was deleted.
- Decision 12: The use of the Stoddard Valley to Johnson Valley Connector was modified to establish a connector route, and to delete its availability for competitive speed events.

In addition to decisions that were proposed in the 2005 EIS, the 2006 ROD made modifications as a result of resolution of protests. These modifications included specific changes to route designations in the Red Mountain, Ord, Newberry Rodman, Fremont, and Juniper Subregions, and in Stoddard Valley. The specific routes designations are listed in the 2006 ROD.

The 2006 WEMO ROD also continued the administrative closure affecting 26 miles of selected dirt roads in a 17,000-acre area of the Rand Mountains, in order to allow time to complete work necessary to implement an educational program and permit system for recreational users.

The following seven management prescriptions for motorized vehicles (designated as "MVs" in the FEIS) were proposed as take avoidance measures:

- Open Routes (MV-1): Routes designated open would be available for a variety of uses including commercial, recreational, casual access, and non-competitive permitted uses. No motorized vehicles would be allowed to travel off of designated routes, except in emergency situations, or with the explicit permission of the BLM, or as specifically noted below.
- Speed Limits (MV-2): With respect to speed limits on unimproved roads, current law would apply. Basic Speed Law (38305) of the 2001 Vehicle Code, Traffic Laws states: "no person would drive an off-highway motor vehicle at a speed limit greater than is reasonable or prudent and in no event at a speed which endangers the safety of other persons and property."
- Speed Regulators (MV-3): Within DWMAs, there is no proposal to install speed regulators; however, if monitoring or studies show that certain unimproved roads are causing increased tortoise mortality, the BLM will consider ways, including speed regulators, to reduce or avoid that mortality.
- Washes (MV-4): On public lands, motorized vehicle travel in washes would be allowed only in those washes that are designated as "open routes" and signed as appropriate.

2015 West Mojave Desert Plan Amendment Supplemental EIS

The 2015 West Mojave Desert Plan Amendment Draft Supplemental EIS is being developed as a result of legal action that was brought against the 2006 WEMO Plan. The Record of Decision for the West Mojave Plan /Amendment to the CDCA Plan was signed in March 2006. In August of 2006, eleven environmental organizations sued the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) claiming the BLM's designation of an off-highway

vehicle route network throughout the WEMO planning area violated FLPMA. The plaintiffs also claimed that the Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report for the West Mojave Plan violated the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The court order of September 2009 left in place most of the WEMO Plan and found no Endangered Species Act violations. However, the court ruling did fault the methods used to identify and designate the nearly 5,100 miles of off-road routes throughout the WEMO Plan area. Subsequently, a court Remedy Order of January 2011, remanded the 2006 WEMO Plan to the BLM and directed the BLM to prepare a revised OHV route network that complies with the designation criteria in 43 CFR 8342.1 .

In response to the court's ruling BLM re-considered the previous route designation efforts and identified the following issues and concerns;

1. Age of decisions

   The route designations of 1985 – 1987 today are nearly 30 years old.

   ACEC Plans which included route designations that were written between 1982 and 1995 and are approximately 20 to 30 years old.

2. Increase in population and amount of vehicles registered

   In the 34 years since the original adoption of the CDCA plan the population of CA has grown by 57.4 percent (2010 U.S. Census compared to 1980 U.S. Census).

   During the same time period the number of OHV registrations grew by 337.3 percent, from 235,003 to 1,027,612.

   These changes result in a greater demand for the limited space and resources found on the public lands.

3. Quality of inventories establishing route system

   The 1985 – 1987 designations did not result in a detailed inventory of all routes on the public lands. These designations were developed from a combination of sources including 15 & 7.5 minute USGS maps, aerial photography, and limited field visits.

   Hundreds of thousands of acres of land has been acquired (and disposed of) throughout the Planning area since the mid-1980's through acquisitions, donations, disposals, and exchanges, including through the West Mojave Land Tenure Project and other major landowner agreements.

   Authorizations approved under right-of-way, permit, and easement were documented in individual hard-copy project casefiles, and were not added to the

inventory and designated network if not already included in the 1985 – 1987 designations.

The 21 subregions identified in the 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project cover only about 1.3 million acres (55%) of the overall 2.35 million acres of Limited access public lands within the planning area. They were only developed for what was believed to be the more environmentally sensitive areas at the time.

Intensive field inventories were only completed for 10 of the 21 subregions identified in the planning area for the 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project. These efforts encompassed roughly 774,000 acres or 33% of the West Mojave Planning area and recorded about 4400 miles of routes.

In the end only eight of the ten inventoried subregions received a route system revision in 2003. Between 2003 and 2006 the Juniper subregion was inventoried, and its designations addressed in the 2006 WEMO Plan.

Therefore, at the end of the 2006 EIS planning effort, 698,000 acres representing approximately 35% of the WEMO Planning area had received a detailed inventory and updated route system.

4. Reproducible documentation supporting consideration of 43 CFR 8342.1 in the development of older route designation efforts

Due to the age of the original 1985-1987 route designation process, copies of all designation forms for all routes affected by that decision are not available.

Documentation is lacking or incomplete to show consideration of the Designation Criteria as outline in 43 CFR 8342.1 for the 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project per the court's ruling.

Areas outside of the 8 inventoried subregions of the 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project and the Juniper subregion did not have route-specific designation documentation. It is unknown what level of documentation exists to support the statement made in the 2003 Designation Project that the parts of the then existing network not included in the 2002 designation effort were reviewed to ensure compatibility with the WEMO conservation strategy and were in compliance with federal regulation

5. Compliance with new Travel Management policy and guidance

Route Designation for OHV use of the BLM administered lands has changed to keep pace with the current concept of Travel Management for the Public Lands. All forms of travel are now being considered in the designation process including Motorized,

Mechanized as well as Non-motorized; not just OHV use as it was in 2006 and before. Additionally, this concept change means that travel for all forms of public land users are now considered in the process including rights of way holders, mining claimants, grazing permittees, as well as casual recreational users.

Because of these concerns and the change in Travel Management policy, BLM decided that 100 percent of the inventory in the planning area would be reviewed, and that the entire area would be considered for new route designations during the 2015 WEMO SEIS process. One of the first steps to be undertaken to reach the final goal of a designated travel network was to develop a base inventory of what currently (2013) exists on the public lands.

The initial inventory was developed from multiple existing sources, and its accuracy and completeness varied depending upon the source. BLM then updated the inventory of linear features by reviewing existing features and tracing additional features from US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) one meter-resolution National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP) aerial photography into the Ground Transportation Linear Features (GTLF) geospatial database.

While the GIS staff were digitizing the route system into the GTLF geo-database system it was discovered that the 2001-2002 field survey was not as complete as first thought. This issue was confirmed when staff compared NAIP aerial photography from 2005 against 2012 for the same location within the Coolgardie subregion. This comparison showed that routes were well-established on the ground in 2005 but were not recorded during the GPS inventory process conducted at that time. Refer to Figures E-1 and E-2 for a sample of what was found within the Coolgardie subregion. Additionally Figures E-3 through Figures E-12 show a sampling of similar missing route situations found within the El Paso, Juniper Flats, Middle Knob, Rand, and Stoddard Valley subregions. Refer to Table E-1 for a comparison of the number of miles inventoried for the 2003 WEMO Route Designation Project compared to what was inventoried for the development of the GTLF geo-database.

Because of the change in policy directing the consideration and incorporation of all transportation features no matter their purpose (authorized, permitted, or casual use) or mode of travel on them (motorized, non-motorized, non-mechanized) into the travel management strategy for an area, the route networks overall mileage will increase from that considered and approved as part of the 2006 WEMO EIS. Routes authorized by permit, right-of-way or easement undergo site-specific review, and, if approved within the last 30 years, would have considered the minimization criteria, Since the ROD for the 2006 WEMO Plan, about 250 miles of authorized and permitted routes have been added so far into the system, the majority of which existed prior to 2005. These routes continue to be added, and a complete review of case files will not be completed until the FEIS.

Finally, because the WEMO SEIS is going to review and update 100% of the planning area versus 30% that was completed in 2006, it is expected that the overall mileage of the route

system will increase. When the BLM conducted its inventory in 2001-2002, there were 4,400 miles of routes in the ten inventoried subregions that encompassed 33% of the 2.35 million acres in the Limited access portion of the planning area. With the development of the new inventory for the planning area approximately 15,000 miles of transportation linear features across the 2.35 million acres of Limited access public lands were identified. These 15,000 miles represent all forms of transportation features on the public lands for both casual use along with permitted uses such as rights-of-ways. Within the 10 subregions inventoried in 2001-2002, the more precise GTLF effort found that the inventory increased by nearly 41 percent from about 4,400 miles in 2001-2002 to 6,200 miles in 2013 within those subregions. Some oversights had been anticipated, and had been pointed out by the public and staff, particularly in identifying additional permitted routes and during the BLM 2012 route signing and monitoring efforts. It was unclear to what extent these were widespread or isolated issues with the inventory, or the result of non-compliance. BLM conducted sample surveys and based on these surveys, it is believed that most of the additional routes identified in the 2013 inventory existed in 2001-2002, but were not identified in the surveys at that time (see Figures E-1 through E-12).

For a detailed description of the process being used to develop the transportation network alternatives for consideration in the 2015 SEIS refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.1.4.

Table E-1 shows the WEMO 2003/2006 Subregions with the mileages as reported in Table 2-7, Page 28 of the 2003 WEMO Designation Project compared to what is found in the 2015 SEIS GTLF geo-database. Because the boundaries of the 2003/2006 subregions do not correspond with current subregion boundaries, these numbers do not translate into the number of miles within the WMRNP subregions analyzed in this EIS.

Table E-1: Comparison of 2001 Inventory to 2015 GTLF Inventory

2003 Subregions	Acres of BLM Lands	2001 Total Miles Inventoried On BLM Lands	2015 Total Miles GTLF Inventory On BLM Lands
AMBOY	31469		
BIGHORN	69750		
COYOTE	103661	411	571
EL MIRAGE	30778	267	287
EL PASO	76961	465	718
FREMONT	126522	582	746
GRANITE	46195		
JUNIPER	22368	164[1]	
KRAMER	83312	642	733
MIDDLE KNOB	36151	91	309
MORONGO	11042		
NEWBERRY-RODMAN	59717	210	293
NORTH SEARLES	49633		
ORD	122565	549[2]	701
PINTO	105121		
RED MOUNTAIN	119152	733	690
RIDGECREST	20918	328	458
SIERRA	32346		
SLEEPING BEAUTY	29004		
SOUTH SEARLES	23192		
SUPERIOR	116612	668	769

[1] Juniper mileage is for the post-2002 inventory conducted prior to the 2006 WEMO Plan DEIS

[2] Ord mileage is for the Ord Pilot Project

APPENDIX E FIGURES

This attachment to Appendix E displays some comparative NAIP photographs of the routes in the inventory in 2005 and 2012. The photographs were used to compare the on the ground changes since 2005, and also the digitizing accuracy for the 2006 WEMO Plan and the current WMRNP inventory completed in 2013. The aerial photography displays what was actually on the ground at the time of each flight, and the routes captured. New routes added to the inventory are indicated on the 2012 figures with dashed lines.

For example, Figure E-1 and Figure E-2 are photographs of the same area in the Coolgardie Subregion flown in 2005 then again in 2012. Note that the dashed white lines on the 2012 figure show all the routes on public lands that were added to the inventory in 2013 for the current planning effort. Some red routes identified as closed in the 2006 WEMO Plan are not included in the 2013 inventory as closed routes because they were not found in either year's aerial photos, or else are substantially misaligned and have been captured as new routes.

The remaining NAIP Imagery Photographs are:

Figure E - 3: El Paso Subregion 2005

Figure E - 4: El Paso Subregion 2012

Figure E – 5: Juniper Flats Subregion 2005

Figure E – 6: Juniper Flats Subregion 2012

Figure E – 7: Middle Knob Subregion 2005

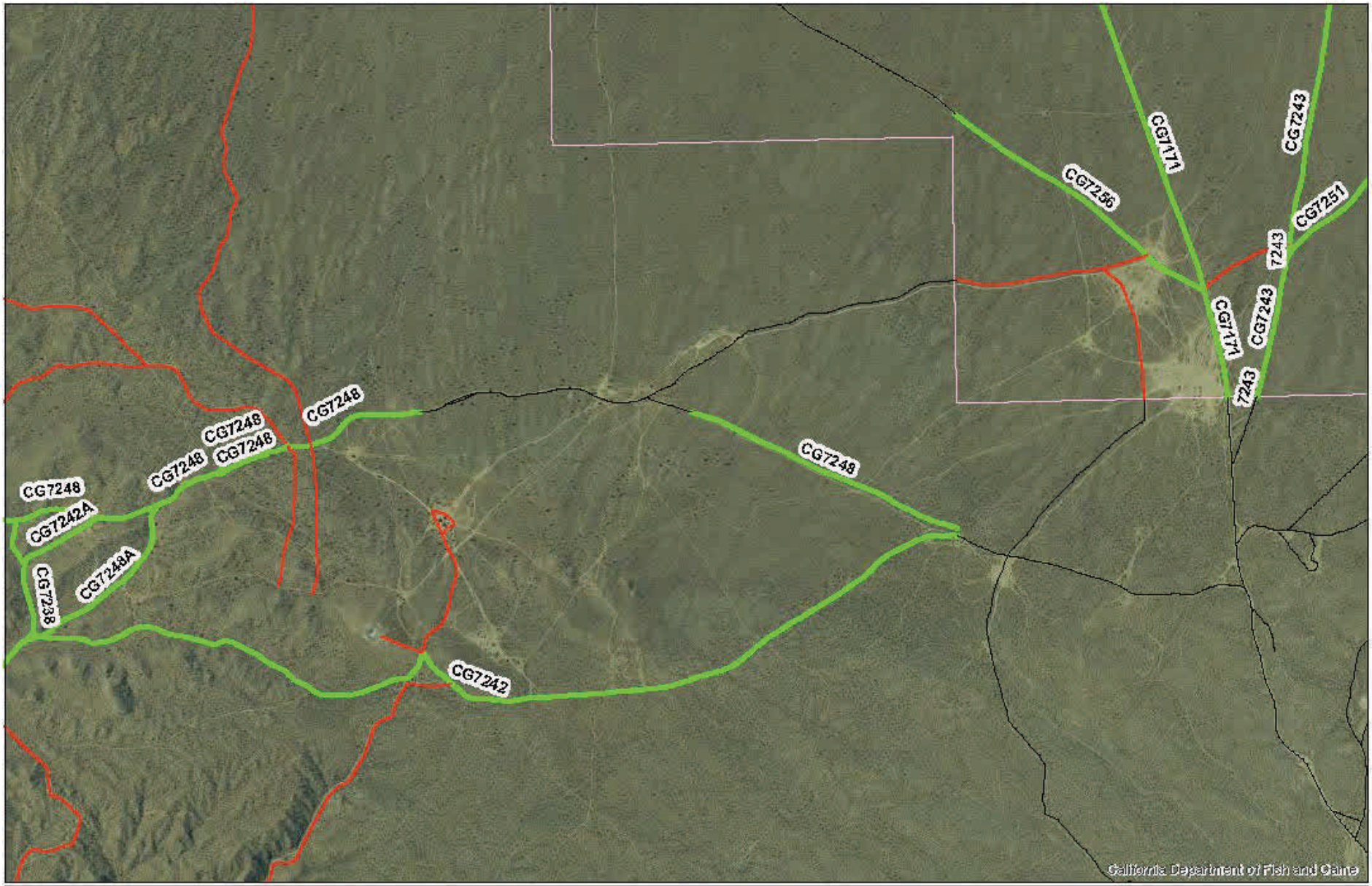
Figure E – 8: Middle Knob Subregion 2012

Figure E – 9: Rands Subregion 2005

Figure E – 10: Rands Subregion 2012

Figure E – 11: Stoddard Valley Subregion 2005

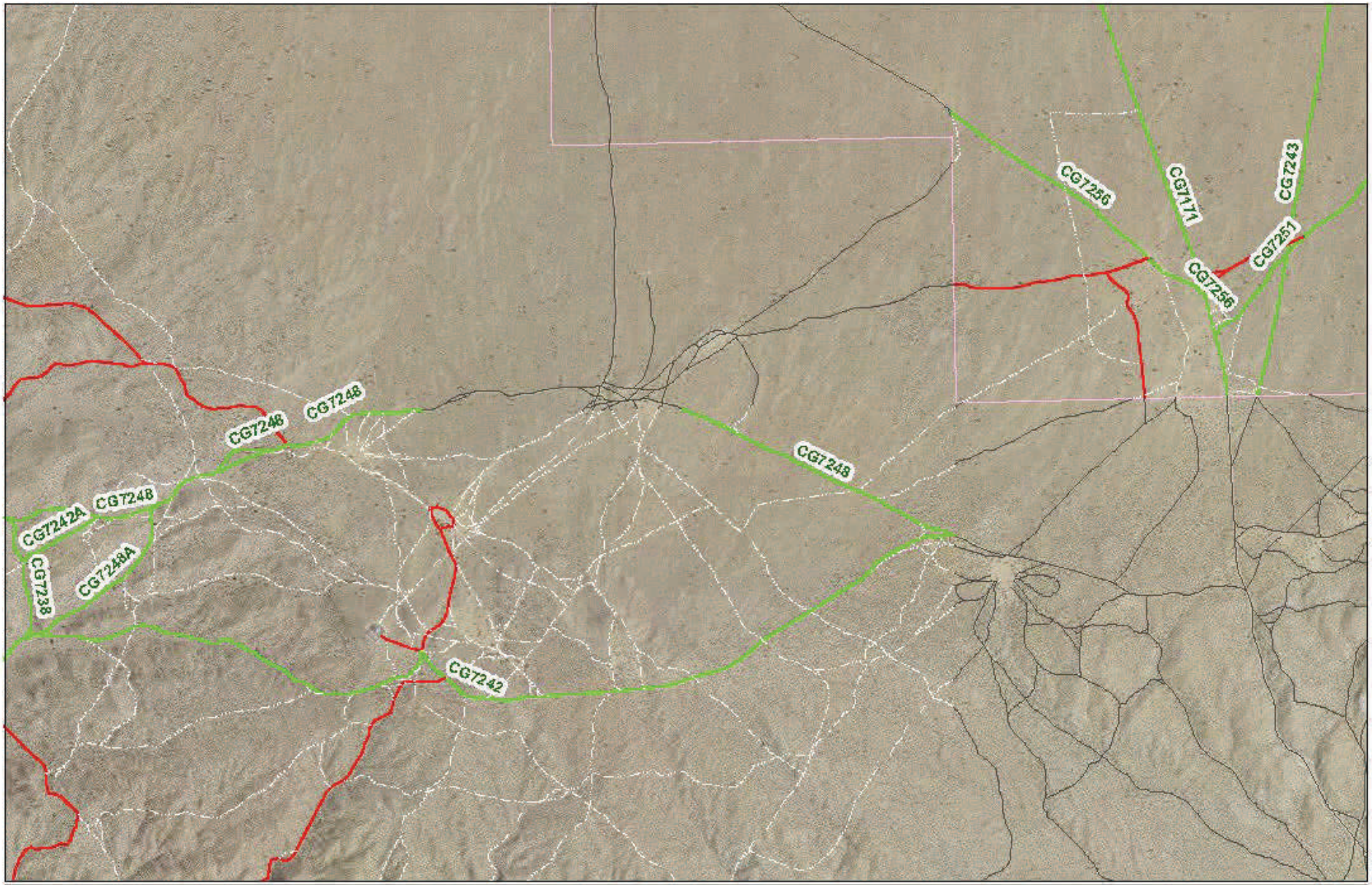
Figure E – 12: Stoddard Valley Subregion 2012



USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY
Lane Mtn Milkvetch/Desert Tortoise within the Coolgardie Mesa ACEC
Coolgardie Subregion

Figure E - 1
2006 Wemo Route Designation
2005 NAIP IMAGERY

1:15,000



USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY

Lane Mtn Milkvetch/Desert Tortoise within the Coolgardie Mesa ACEC
Coolgardie Subregion

Figure E - 2
2013 - 2014 GTLF Route Designation
2012 NAIP IMAGERY

1:15,000

Legend

- Open to All Vehicles
- Closed for All Vehicles
- County, State, or Federally Maintained
- Access Limited or Seasonally Closed
- Open for Two Wheeled Vehicles Only
- Undesignated or Unknown

USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY
El Paso Subregion

Figure E - 3
2006 Wemo Route Designation
2005 NAIP IMAGERY

1:15,000

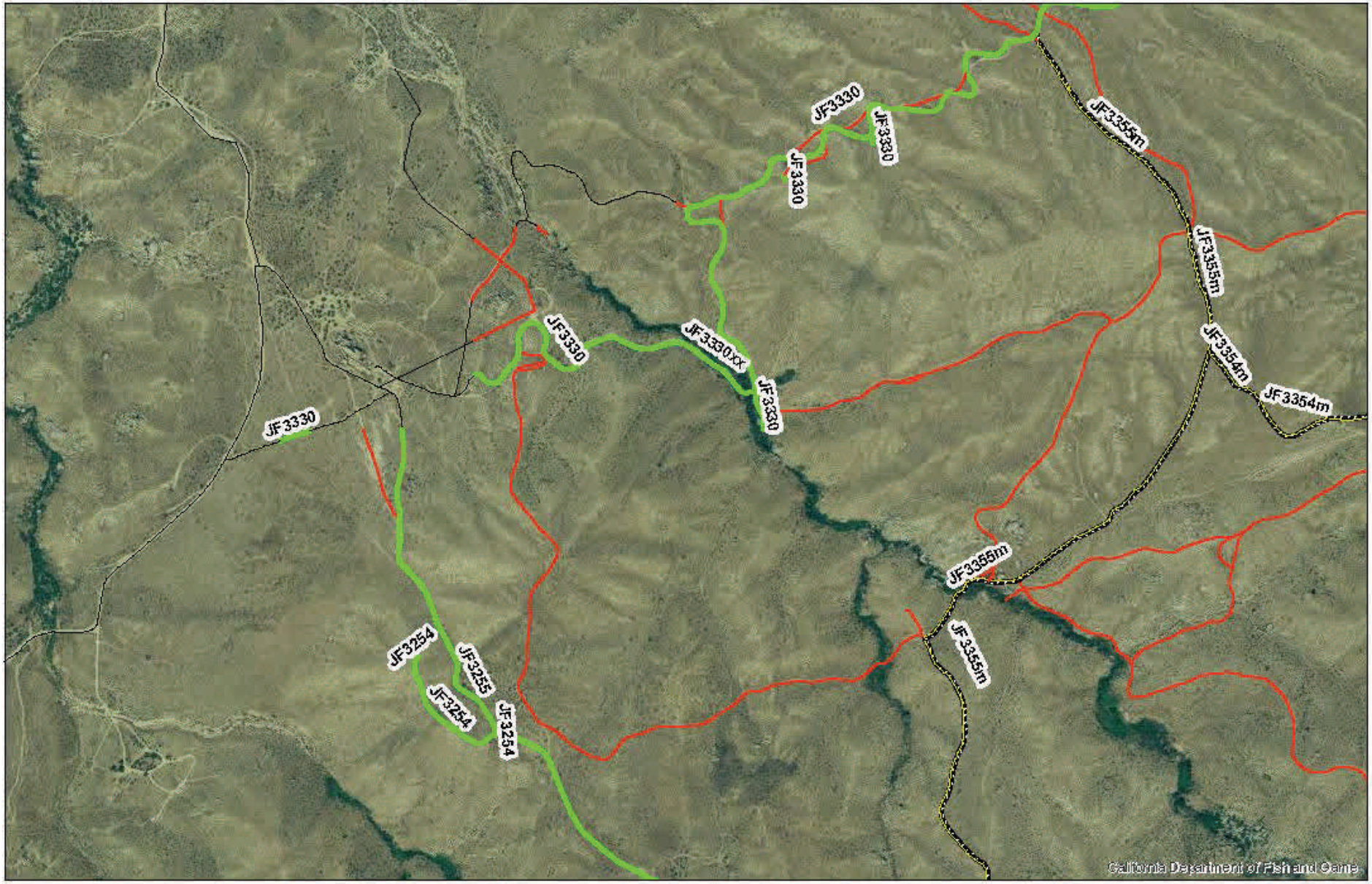
Legend

- Open
- Closed
- Limited
- Non BLM
- Unknown

USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY
El Paso Subregion

Figure E - 4
2013 - 2014 GTLF Route Designation
2012 NAIP IMAGERY

1:15,000



Legend

- Open to All Vehicles
- Closed to All Vehicles
- County, State, or Federally Maintained
- Access Limited or Seasonally Closed
- Open for Two Wheeled Vehicles Only
- Undesignated or Unknown

USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY

Juniper Flats Arrastre Canyon & Coxey Road
Juniper Flats Subregion

Figure E - 5
2006 Wemo Route Designation
2005 NAIP IMAGERY

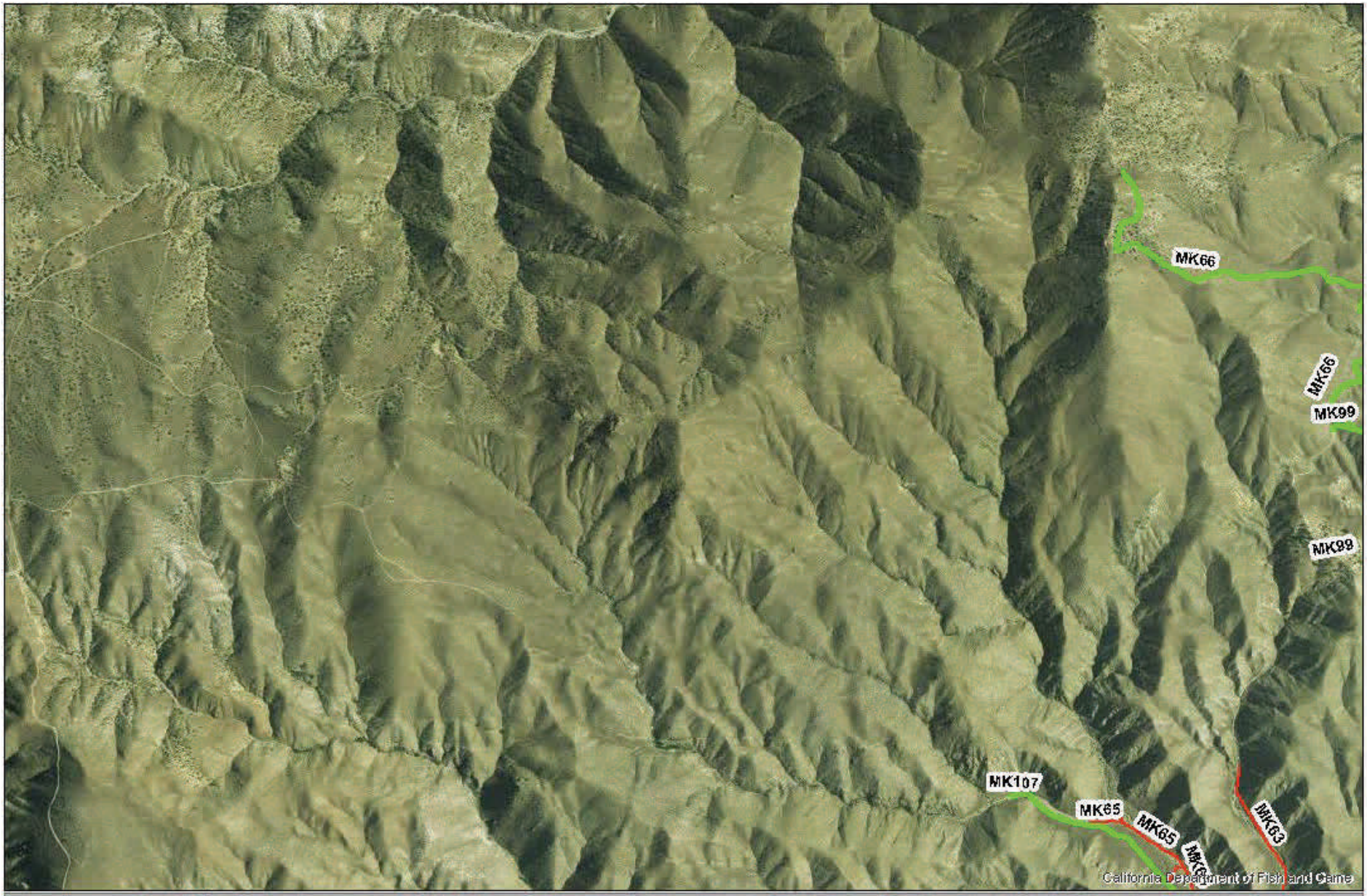
1:10,000

USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY

Juniper Flats Arrastre Canyon & Coxey Road
Juniper Flats Subregion

Figure E - 6
2013 - 2014 GTLF Route Designation
2012 NAIP IMAGERY

1:10,000



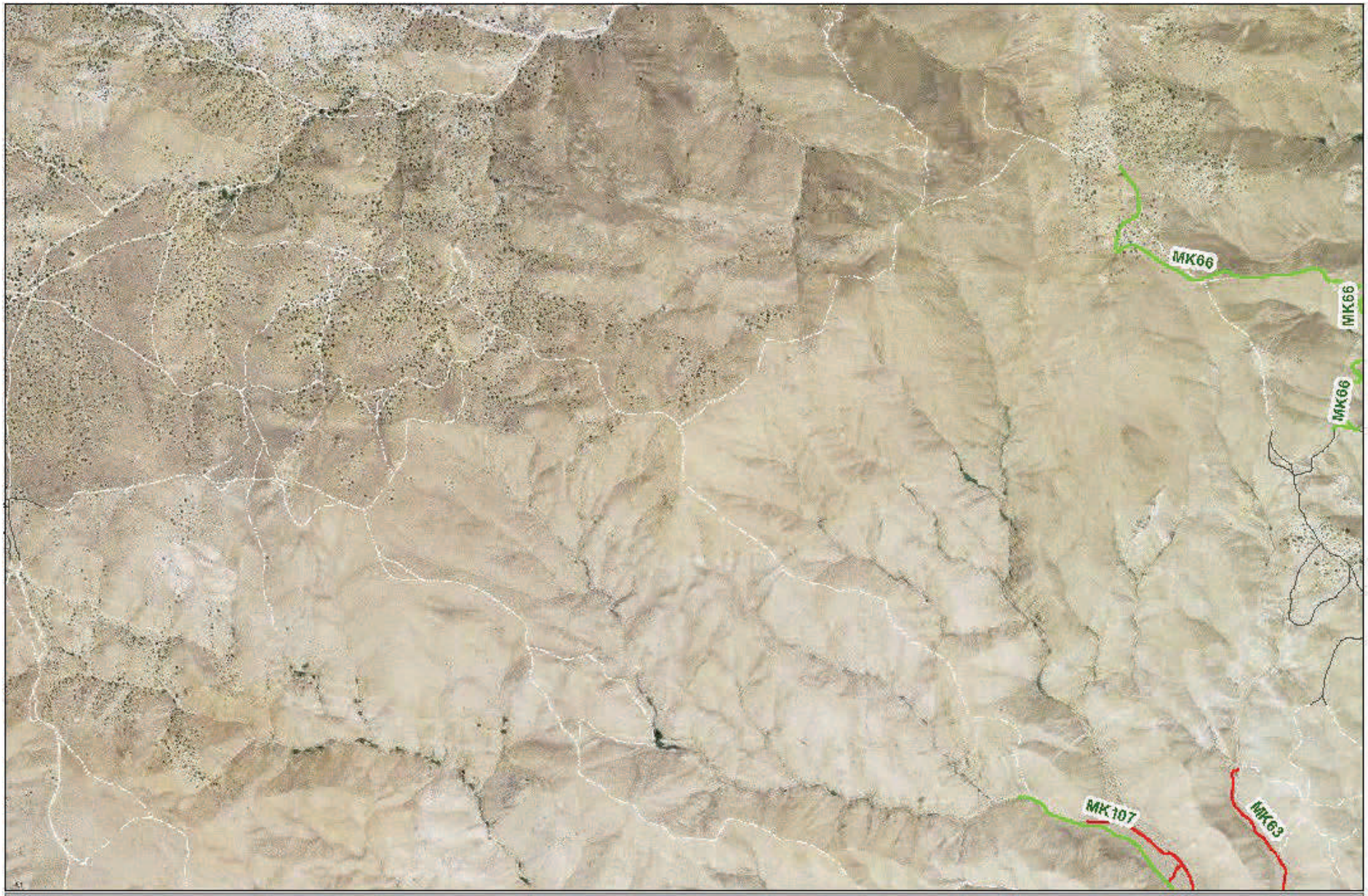
Legend

- Open to All Vehicles
- Closed for All Vehicles
- County, State, or Federally Maintained
- Access Limited or Seasonally Closed
- Open for Two Wheeled Vehicles Only
- Undesignated or Unknown

USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY
Antimony Flat Area
Middle Knob Subregion

Figure E - 7
2006 Wemo Route Designation
2005 NAIP IMAGERY

1:15,000



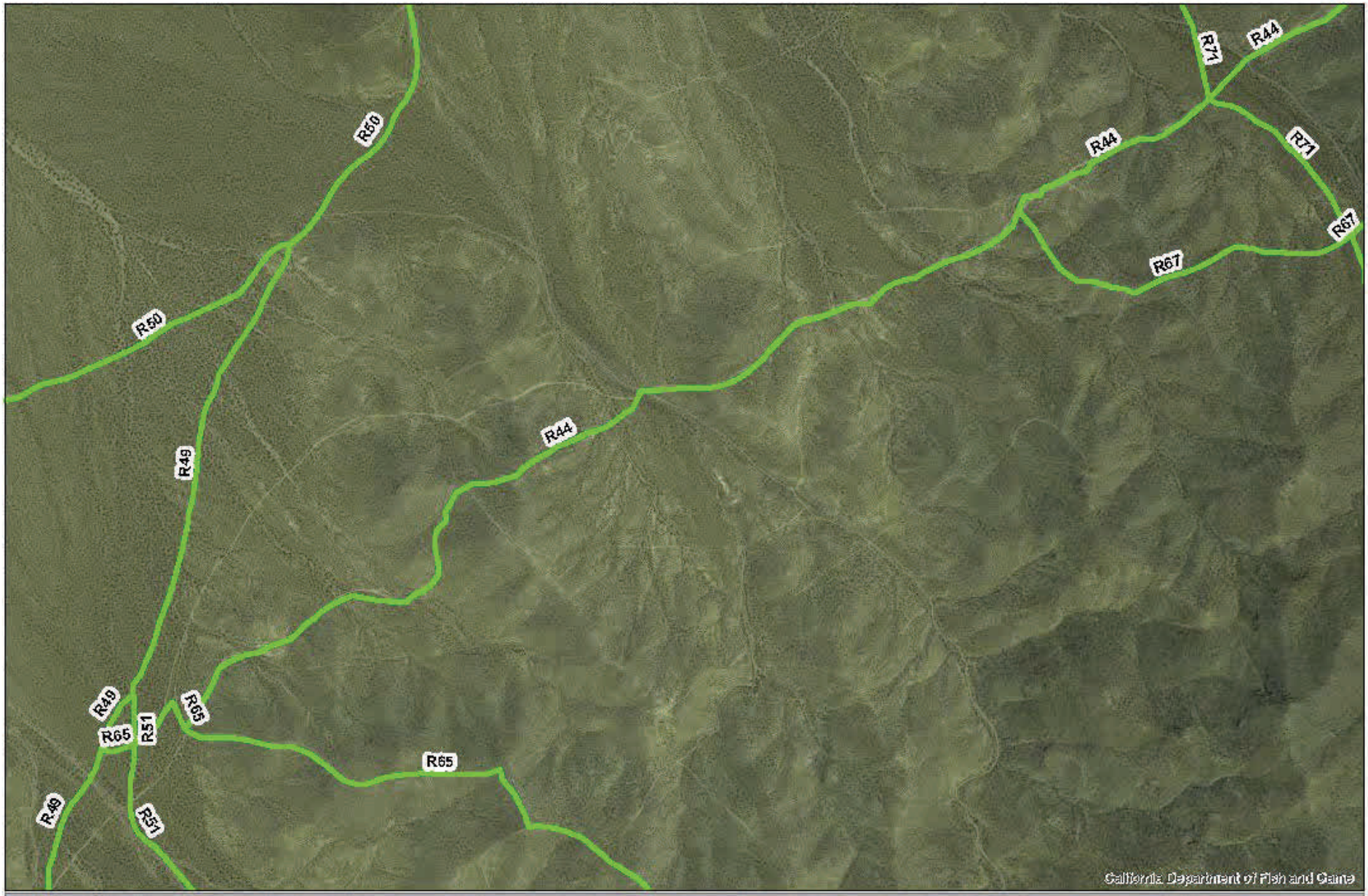
Legend

- Open
- Closed
- Limited
- Non BLM
- Unk

USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY
Antimony Flat Area
Middle Knob Subregion

Figure E - 8
2013 - 2014 GTLF Route Designation
2012 NAIP IMAGERY

1:15,000



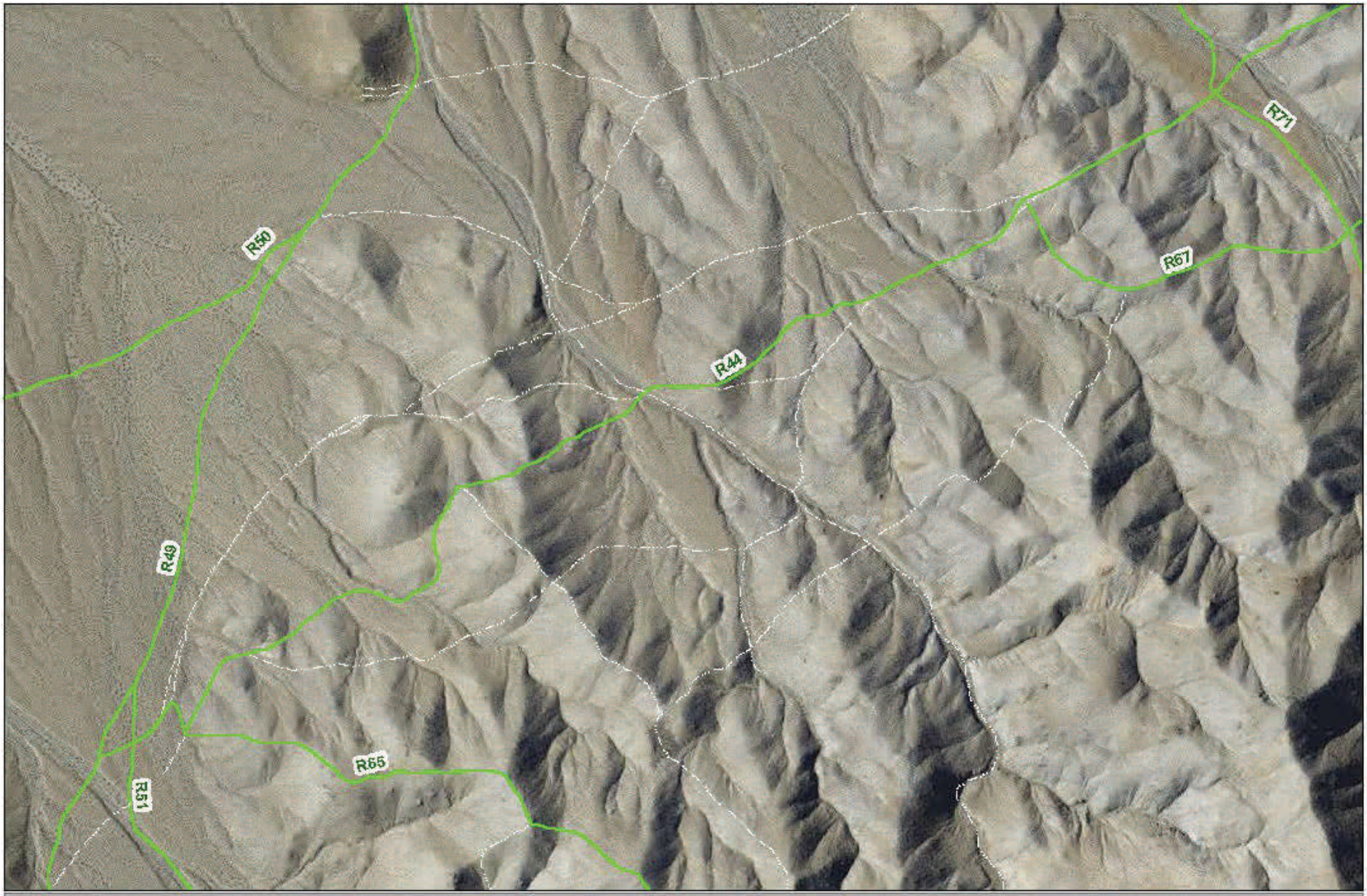
Legend

- Open to All Vehicles
- Closed for All Vehicles
- County, State, or Federally Maintained
- Access Limited or Seasonally Closed
- Open for Two Wheeled Vehicles Only
- Undesignated or Unknown

USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY
Rand Mountains
Rands Subregion

Figure E - 9
2006 Wemo Route Designation
2005 NAIP IMAGERY

1:10,000



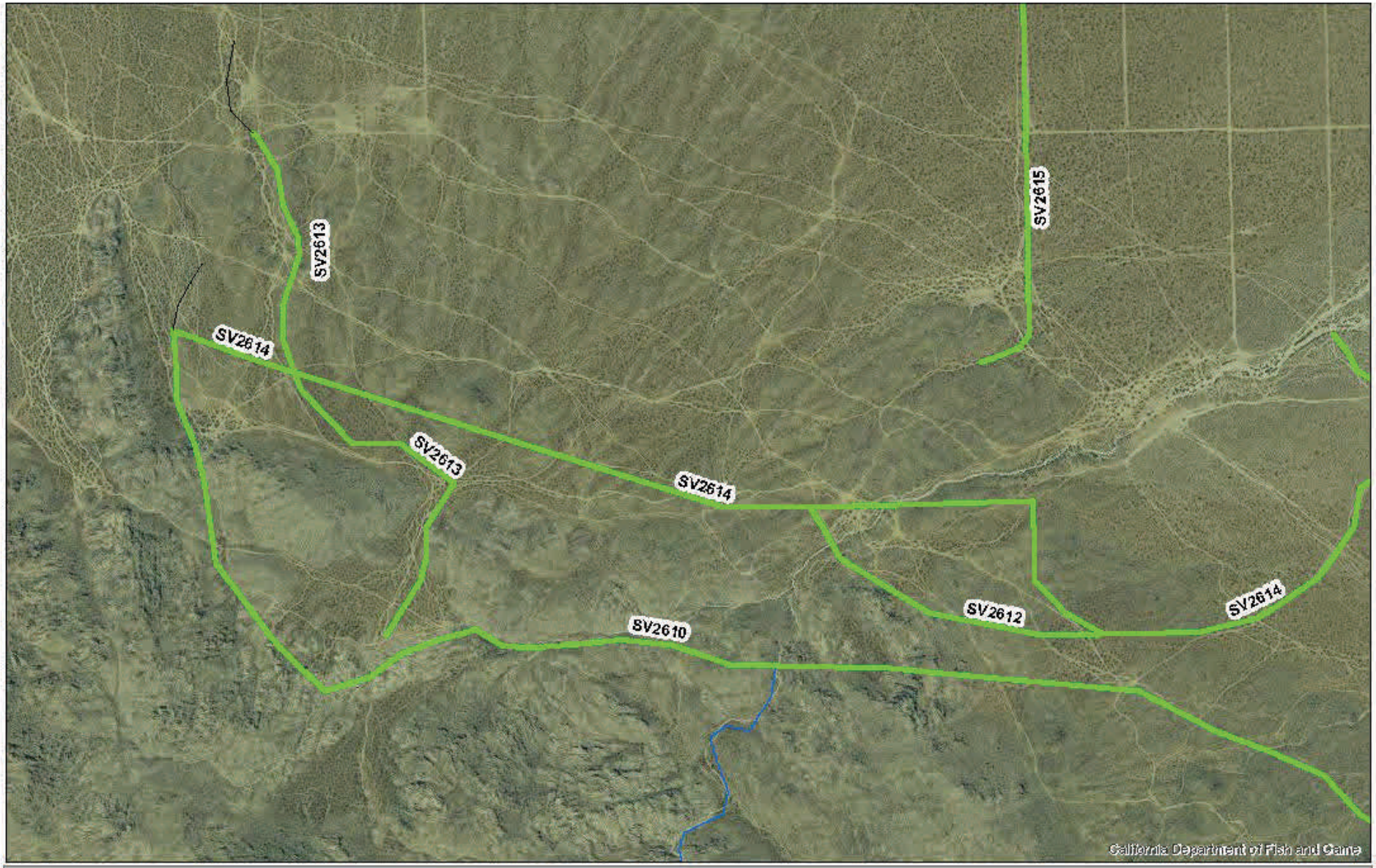
Legend

- Open
- Closed
- Limited
- NonBLM
- Unk

USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY
Rand Mountains
Rands Subregion

Figure E - 10
2013 - 2014 GTLF Route Designation
2012 NAIP IMAGERY

1:10,000



Legend

- Open to All Vehicles
- Closed for All Vehicles
- County, State , or Federally Maintained
- Access Limited or Seasonally Closed
- Open for Two Wheeled Vehicles Only
- Undesignated or Unknown

USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY
Granite Area
Stoddard Valley Subregion

Figure E - 11
2006 Wemo Route Designation
2005 NAIP IMAGERY

1:10,000

Legend

- Open
- Closed
- Limited
- NonBLM
- Unk

USE OF NAIP IMAGERY IN THE WEST MOJAVE ROUTE INVENTORY
Granite Area
Stoddard Valley Subregion

Figure E - 12
2013 - 2014 GTLF Route Designation 1:10,000
2012 NAIP IMAGERY